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5 January 1955

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD:

SUBJECT: Conversation with Clark
Committee CIA Task Force

1. Colonel Edwards met this morning at 9:00 a.m. in Room 216, South Building with Colonel Eugene Miller, Colonel Herman O. Lane, and Mr. John L. McGruder, the Committee inspecting the Security Office for the Clark Committee CIA Task Force. Also present were General James S. Christiansen, Director of the Task Force, and [REDACTED] of the Security Office. General Christiansen left within a few minutes after the meeting commenced to keep another appointment.

2. Colonel Edwards opened the conversation by explaining that in order to save the Committee time and to clarify any misunderstanding at this time, he wished to state his position with respect to screening and clearance procedures aimed at detecting and eliminating any communists in CIA. He stated that perhaps he had not devoted sufficient time to this question in his briefing of the Committee on the previous day, and that he was concerned over the questions which the Committee had asked in subsequent interviews with [REDACTED] which made it appear that the Security Office was knowledgeable of and had the names or lists of communists on its roles. Colonel Edwards emphasized that such a situation does not exist and that if there were any communists in CIA of which he was knowledgeable, that would make Colonel Edwards himself a communist. Colonel Edwards further stated that he would welcome the names of any individuals which the committee might have in its possession who are on the roles of CIA and who are alleged to be communists.

3. Colonel Edwards stated that any files within reason in possession of the Security Office are available to the Committee for inspection. Colonel Lane and Colonel Miller both replied that they had no knowledge or names of individuals in CIA who were alleged to be communists and that a remark by Colonel Miller to [REDACTED] to the effect, "What IBM button do you press in order to get the names of communists in CIA?" was made in a jocular vein and was not intended to imply that they knew that there are communists in the Agency.

4. Colonel Edwards stated that he assumed and was sure that the Committee had allegations from outside sources of communists in CIA and again urged that if the Committee would make names of any suspected

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individuals available to him that he would make the files available to show what steps had been taken in connection with any such individuals. Colonel Edwards further stated that he felt sure that the Committee probably had received complaints or allegations from [REDACTED] and that he would be glad to show the Committee the actions taken by this office in connection therewith. Colonel Edwards also mentioned that

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[REDACTED] had made allegations concerning a senior official of the Agency and that the file of investigations conducted in this connection would be made available to the Committee. He also stated that the [REDACTED] case would be shown to the Committee, illustrating the steps taken by this office and the Agency in resolving that case. Colonel Miller stated at first that he did not wish to see any files or look at any files, unless he was ordered to do so, but after a bit of conversation on this subject, it appeared that he would be willing to be briefed on files as indicated by Colonel Edwards.

5. The three members of the Committee stated that their principal mission is to ascertain the policies and procedures under which the Security Office operates in making its determination concerning security risks. They wish to know what standards and criteria are used specifically to evaluate whether a man is a security risk or not. They placed considerable emphasis on the fact that it appears that the standards and criteria generally used in the Government in this regard are too broad and general and might be subject to different interpretation by different appraisers or by the same appraiser if motivated by a personal like or dislike of the subject, or through an indisposition of the appraiser on one day as opposed to his feelings on another day. As an illustration, the question was raised on the standard for "discretion." The question was asked what is considered to be indiscreet to the extent that would establish a security risk. It was explained to the Committee that the business of appraisal and evaluating an individual's security acceptability is not an exact science, and that no "XYZ" formula can be devised which will equate itself into a communist, but that judgment and the preponderance of evidence are the controlling factors in evaluation and appraisal. The Committee's reply to this was that they realized that an exact formula may not be possible, but that they desired to know what training was given and what experience was required of an appraiser in order to guide his judgment in evaluating security cases. They also wish to know what controls were exercised in the appraisal component which would preclude an appraiser or other employee in the file room, or elsewhere, with access to a report, from withholding documentary evidence from a file, so that the wrong appraisal will be made of an unsuitable person. It was explained to the Committee that the checks and balances in the procedures were such as to eliminate any such possibility.

6. The question was raised as to what controls are exercised over the security files of personnel employed in the Security Office. They were

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advised that such files are maintained in the office of the Chief, Personnel Security Division, and are releasable only to senior officers of the Security Office by the Chief or Deputy Chief, Personnel Security Division, personally.

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7. Colonel Lane stated that he had been informed that G-2 did not trust [REDACTED] as he was considered a security risk. Colonel Edwards replied that he was knowledgeable of the situation concerning [REDACTED] and that there was a file on this case which was available to the inspectors, and that we had asked G-2 for any information on the question and that a complete FBI investigative report was in our files which was a completely clear report on the subject. Colonel Lane stated that on the other hand, there was a person of foreign extraction with whom he had had contact in the area division, named [REDACTED], whom he considered to be a most sincere, conscientious and good employee.

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8. Colonel Miller stated that he had asked George Carey for a list of all OSS people who were now employed in the Agency. He stated that among many of the letters received by the Committee making allegations of a derogatory nature or that there were communists in the Agency, one such letter stated that CIA was being run by OSS personnel. He therefore desired to have this list so that each individual name could be pinpointed. Colonel Edwards advised him we were cognizant of former OSS personnel working with the Agency. Colonel Edwards further explained that as the transition was made from OSS to SSU and then to CIA that many former OSS persons dropped out or had a break in service and that at any time when they returned for employment in CIA, they were re-investigated and that many more were weeded out.

9. With respect to the letters which were said to have been received by the Committee making allegations against the Agency, Colonel Miller stated that none of them mentioned any specific names.

10. Colonel Miller stated that he would like to have a memorandum from Colonel Edwards, setting forth the methods and procedures which are used by the Security Office in determining a security risk.

11. All three members of the Committee stated that they had not intended by any of their questions to give the impression that they knew or believed that there were communists on the roles of the Agency. They stated that the field of security was a new one to them and that they needed to ask many questions and were afraid that many of them would appear to be foolish questions because of their ignorance of the subject.

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[REDACTED]
Executive Officer

SO/CFH:agg (1-5-55)

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